1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

249 in meeting his contract with the agent. The result of this and other
442
438 speculative practices is that the price of tobacco tends to spiral upwards
452 throughout the season.
455

The crop is delivered to the buyer in small lots--10 to 15 kilo-
249 grams--which are assembled, graded, and baled. The bales are taken to
276
438 the warehouse of the agent where they are added to other bales to form
442 a large pile in which fermentation can take place. After fermentation the bales are broken, and the leaf is re-sorted. With the better grades the sorting is done very carefully, and a large number of size and texture grades are separated. Intermediate grades are sorted less carefully, often by bundles rather than by individual leaves. The poorest grades are stripped without grading. After sorting or stripping, the leaf is again placed in bales and kept in the warehouse until transport can be arranged to deliver the tobacco to Salvador or to the cigar factories.

249 Most of the tobacco produced in the Recôncavo is exported. In the
433
439 years 1946 to 1950, inclusive, 166,676 tons of leaf tobacco were produced in Bahia and 128,567 tons were exported, so that about 75 per cent of the total crop of the state was exported.[2] However, the exported leaf is made up of the choice tobaccos, that is "Mata Fina," which are largely grown in the Recôncavo. It may be concluded from this that at least four-fifths of the tobacco crop of the Recôncavo was exported during this years. Tobacco exported from the Recôncavo normally composes 70 per cent of all the tobacco exported from Brazil. In value, the tobacco exported from the Recôncavo was less than 1 per cent of the total exports of all products from Brazil.[3]

482 Transportation. The backs of men and of animals are the basic
492
489 transportation media in the Recôncavo: almost all goods begin and end

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

482
492
489 their journeys thus, and many agricultural products are transported in
no other fashion from the site of cultivation to the ultimate consumer.
[491] In each of the municípios of the Recôncavo, as in almost all of Brazil, there are extensive areas which are neither on nor near roads. In these areas, but also along the highways and in the cities, men and beasts of burden transport the products of the agricultural economy.

489 Long distance transportation, formerly dependent on animals, has been
499
493 changed in the last half century by the introduction of railroads and
190 more recently, automotive vehicles. In a similar fashion, both primi-
178
505 tive and relatively modern transport are used on the waters of the Bâia de Todos os Santos and of the various estuaries. Most of the agricultural products which cross the Bay are carried on open-decked sailing vessels and canoes, but there are also a number of motor vessels and motorboats which provide relatively effective transport from Salvador to all the cidades on or near tidewater.

492 In the tobacco-manioc region, and in rural Brazil generally, the donkey or the mule is the characteristic beast of burden. On the backs of these animals the bales of tobacco, the sacks of manioc and farinha de mandioca, and the baskets of corn and vegetables are carried to the market. The equipage of the donkey is simple--a halter and a rough
492 crosstree pack saddle with a thick pad of vegetable fiber. In the
493 sugar cane region the donkey is supplemented and, in most areas, almost
[191] supplanted by the ox cart. The ox cart of Bahia, essentially like the carts used in other Brazilian sugar areas, is built of heavy wood with a thick wooden bed and tongue, wooden axle, and solid wooden wheels about five-feet in diameter. This high, massive contraption has no bearings, and in dry weather especially it is frequently necessary to repair the wheels and axles. The ox cart is an admirable device for the Cretaceous lowland, for with its high wheels it can carry as much

mers. However, on almost every plantation there are brick-lined springs from which the inhabitants get their drinking water. Women or children carrying five-gallon cans of water on their heads, and donkeys carrying four wooden kegs of water, are common sights along the roads of the Recôncavo. For the cattle and other livestock of the plantations, drinking places are excavated wherever there promises to be enough water. Frequently, however, these go dry in the summer, especially during the drought years which occur cyclically in rhythm with the droughts of the sertão. At such times loss of cattle is prevalent, except on plantations situated near one of the small rivers.

A high-voltage electric line passes through this section leading from the generating station further inland to the capital city. Recently most of the plantations have been able to connect with this line, so that at least the owners' houses have electric light. The houses of the workers are without it except at the factory, where the mill supplies its own electric power which is carried to almost all the workers' houses.

There are four state schools and one county school distributed among the plantations. The central school in the town of Vila Recôncavo is not attended by children from the plantations. Two plantations have their own chapels, which are visited at irregular intervals by the priests of Vila Recôncavo. On the other plantations a small altar is set up in the owner's house for special occasions such as Christmas, when the town priest is invited to celebrate the Mass.

There is in the town a medical post with a visiting doctor, a dentist, and several nurses in training, which is administered by a Franciscan lay brother and supported by federal, state, and county funds and by private donations. This post is fairly recent, and its influences are spreading only slowly to the rural area. Also in the town is a small county medical post run by a resident physician. The sugar factory has a dispensary with a nurse and is visited by the town doctor. Almost every plantation has its own first-aid equipment, generally in the owner's house.

There are no fairs in the community. There are stores in the town and a large supply store at the factory, run by the corporation, and nearly every plantation has its own small store. Major purchases are made at the weekly market in Centro, in the neighboring county. There are also traveling ped-

743 so there is competent medical assistance. Those who are too poor to pay receive free aid and medications, milk, and soup; those who can pay do so, paying only the wholesale prices of the articles. The institute is well equipped, with an x-ray machine, diathermy, and other heat appliances, which are popular because of the prevalence of colds and rheumatism.

743 The institute also operates the weekly motion picture which 529 has been a great boon to the town, a recreation room, centrally located in the town, which has a radio, billiard tables, and [546] a bar selling milk shakes, sandwiches, beer, and soft drinks. 743 This place has become the major meeting place for the men 873 and boys of the town. In addition to this, the institute also runs a night school for adults.

463 Group 2, as listed at the beginning of this chapter, con- [571] sists mainly of the people who work for those in Group 1 and who are attached to them by the bonds of the patronship to some extent, as well as by salary. The majority of persons [462] in this category are women, engaged in the traditional female pursuits of washing, ironing, sewing, embroidering, and general housework.

296 As a rule the laundry is washed at one of the town wells, 462 which are encased in cement. The women carry the dirty 463 clothes, a bucket, and wooden basin, all piled on top of their heads, to the well. They pull up enough water in their buck- [482] ets to fill the basins in which the clothes are washed. After a soaking and scrubbing with soap the wet, soapy clothes are spread out on the ground in the sun, and from time to time water is sprinkled on them to aid the sun in bleaching. Then the clothes are rewashed and spread out to dry. Depending upon the weather, the washing and drying process may take from a whole day to three or four days before the clothes are considered clean enough. Then they are taken home to be [463] ironed. The older pattern demanded that a different person do [178] the ironing, but today this pattern is breaking down and frequently the same person washes and irons. The irons used are the old-fashioned kind heated by charcoal, which is placed inside and ignited. The irons are made with drafts to keep the fire going, and the women must stop frequently to fan the fire or renew the charcoal. Often a busy woman has two irons going and sets one aside to heat while she irons with the other.

462 Many women also prepare xangó, a small sardinelike fish 252 caught in great quantities by the fishermen of Vila Recônca- 463

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Town Life]

463
312
[492]
[482]

two miles west of the town to another well which did not have to serve so many people. Many women also made this trip, with five-gallon cans of water on their heads, and with their children carrying smaller cans.

463
523
422

In the past many women of this group possessed heirlooms: jewelry handed down to them by their female ancestors who had been favorite slaves of their white masters and who had received valuable brooches, necklaces, rings, and earrings from them, in accordance with the old pattern of luxury which extended even to certain slaves. In most cases this jewelry has now been sold at some time of emergency to antique dealers who scour the rural areas looking for such treasures, which are now highly valuable and sought by collectors.

463

Group 3 is made up of independent artisans, that is, people who are self-employed. It differs from Group 1 in that its members rarely employ the services of other people in personal or household activities, although gardeners, carpenters, tailors, fishermen, bricklayers, and barbers do employ people in their business. The large number of men employed by the bricklayers should be explained, as it is not a permanent category. The census from which these data were taken was made in June, 1950, at the height of the work of paving the town streets with cobblestones. A number of bricklayers had come to town for this work, and they as well as the resident bricklayers had to employ workmen to do the work with them for the municipal government. When the paving was finished there was no longer a need for so many bricklayers, and they either left or went into fishing or some other occupation. Since the data were collected, the tailors have also moved to another town as a result of the lack of business in Vila Recôncavo.

463
226
43

The majority of men in this group are the fishermen, who number 132, plus 5 who are employed rather than self-employed. They fish from canoes, with several types of nets, for a large variety of fish. The federal statistics agent lists seventeen types of fish, including shrimp, giving the following weight and price for the year's activities: 129,070 kilograms and Cr$921.540,00 (slightly under $50,000.00). Shrimp earns slightly more than half this total, Cr$468.000,00, although the amount in kilograms is only 26,000. Xangó, already mentioned, is the second most profitable product, bringing in Cr$195.000,00 for 65,000 kilograms. The statistics agent admits that these figures are approximations